



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MEDIA CONTACTS
Jared Touchin | 928.221.9253
Jolene Holgate | 928.308.4174
Chrissy Largo | 928.637.5603
nnlb.communications@gmail.com

Health, Education, and Human Services Committee receives annual report from Diné College

WINDOW ROCK – Last Wednesday, the Health, Education, and Human Services Committee received the 2013 Diné College Annual Report, presented by Dr. Maggie George, president of Diné College, located in Tsaile, Ariz.

According to the report, Diné College is a two-year community college that is offered to a growing number of Navajo students throughout the Navajo Nation. Currently, there are six college campuses that are a part of the multi-campus system.

“In March, we had a visit from the Higher Learning Commission where we submitted the proposal to offer a Bachelor of Arts Degree in business administration with a focus on tribal management and entrepreneurship. They approved our proposal and it is going through the stages and we should hear from them sometime in May,” stated George.

In addition to offering degrees and certificates, Diné College offers a GED program in partnership with Navajo Nation Workforce Development and the State of New Mexico. Since starting the GED program, a total of 206 students have graduated.

“A couple years ago, we started looking at dual credit or access to higher education. We started in the fall and in the last year, we have entered 20 dual credit agreements with local high school districts,” stated George.

A total of 186 students will graduate from Diné College this May, with various degrees including Bachelor of Arts in Education, Associate of Art, Associate of Science, Associate of Applied Science and certificates, according to the report.

The first Navajo Community College was established in 1968, which later became Tsaile’s Diné College.

For the last three years, Diné College has been working on a congressional mandate facility study with the Bureau of Indian Affairs to reevaluate the Navajo Community College of 1968. There was a 36-year-old mandate for the BIA to conduct facility studies but which has yet to be accomplished.

“I know that the K-12 schools, the grant schools, and the old BIA schools, there’s years of being on the improvement list and there’s funding. I’m just thinking there seems to be a different

approach when it comes down to college campus,” stated HEHSC member Council Delegate Walter Phelps (Cameron, Coalmine Canyon, Leupp, Tolani Lake, Tsidi To ii).

HEHSC vice chair Council Delegate Charles Damon, II encouraged the committee to support Diné College representatives in obtaining additional land for improvement.

“We will write a letter of support from the committee, if that is okay with all the community members,” stated Delegate Damon.

According to the report, Diné College is the first tribally controlled community college in the United States, fully accredited by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association in 1976. About 52% of Diné college faculty is Native American.

“We are the first tribal college and over 46-years- old this year. Our buildings, especially at our administrative campus in Tsaile, is a challenge to keep up. I want to respectfully request that the Navajo Nation work with us to create a permanent construction funding source,” stated George.

HEHSC members voted 3-0 to accept the report.

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